

Data Brief: Infant Safe Sleep Practices Among NH Women Who Gave Birth in 2016-2017

Safe Sleep Recommendations:

In 2017 there were approximately 3600 sudden and unexpected infant deaths (SUID) in the US. These included about 1400 deaths due to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), about 900 due to accidental suffocation resulting from an unsafe sleep environment, as well as about 1300 due to unknown causes. While the exact cause of SIDS has yet to be determined, more has been learned about creating a safe sleeping environment for infants to reduce the risk of SUID including SIDS.¹ The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) policy statement on recommendations for a safe infant sleep environment includes the following:

1. Infants should always be placed to sleep on their back until the age of one year.
2. Infants should sleep on a firm sleep surface in a crib, bassinet, or portable play yard that meets the safety standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).
3. Room-sharing, not bed-sharing, in the parents' bedroom until the age of one year. This allows for convenient feeding and monitoring while reducing the risk of suffocation that can occur with bed-sharing.
4. Keep infants bed free of soft objects including pillows, toys, bumper pads, and loose bedding such as blankets. Sleep clothing such as a wearable blanket is preferred to loose blankets or quilts.
5. Avoid smoke exposure during pregnancy and after birth. Maternal smoking is associated with and increased risk of SIDS.²

The New Hampshire Division of Public Health Services promotes these best practices for safe infant sleep to health care providers, parents, and caregivers in order to prevent sleep-related deaths.

The Healthy People 2020 goal for the proportion of infants who are put to sleep on their backs is 75.8%.³ New Hampshire PRAMS data for 2016-2017 show that 86% of New Hampshire infants are most often put to sleep on their backs.

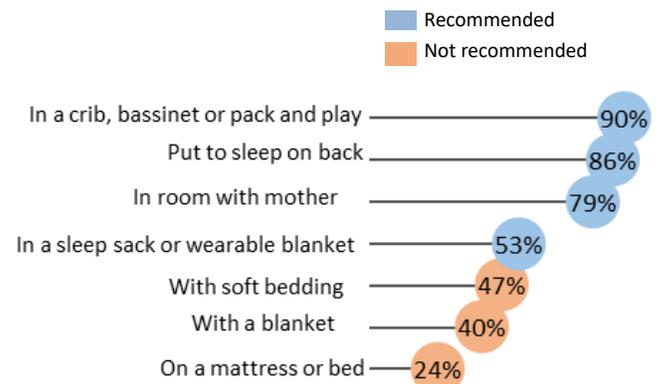
86% reported most often laying their baby down to sleep on his or her back (supine), the recommended position.

90% put their infant to sleep in a crib, bassinet, or pack and play (recommended).

79% reported that their baby usually sleeps alone in a crib or bassinet in the same room with the mother (recommended).

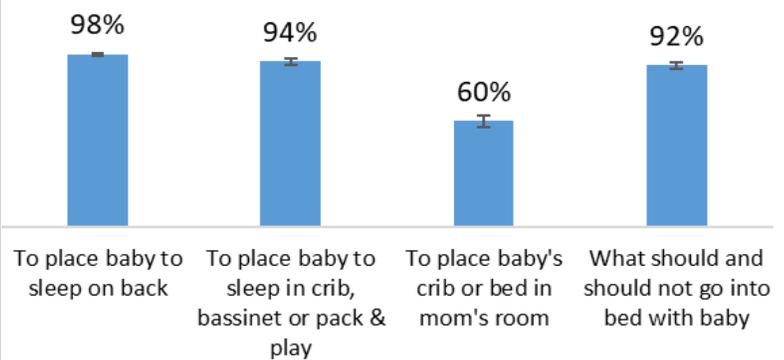
Sleep Environment

Percent of women reporting ways their infant most often slept in the last 2 weeks



Safe Sleep Advice from Health Care Providers

Percent of women who report receiving advice from a health care provider regarding AAP recommended infant sleep practices



¹About SIDS and SUID | CDC. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/sids/about/index.htm>

²SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Updated 2016 Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment. (2016). *Pediatrics*,138(5). doi:10.1542/peds.2016-2938

³Maternal, Infant, and Child Health. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/maternal-infant-and-child-health/objectives>

Infant Sleep Practices by Maternal Characteristics

Recommended Practices:

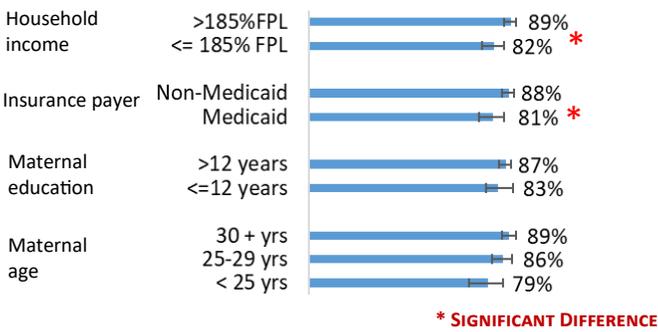
Infant is most often put to sleep on his or her back

A significantly smaller percentage of women in the lower income group and of those who are enrolled in Medicaid place their infant to sleep on his or her back than those in the higher income group or those with other insurance respectively. There is no significant difference in placing the infant to sleep on his or her back by maternal education or age.

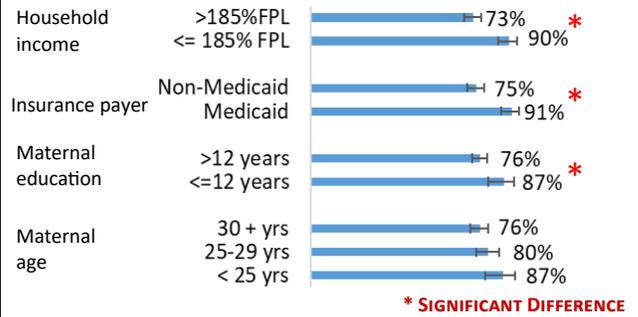
Infant shares room with mother

A significantly higher percentage of women who are in the lower income bracket, who are enrolled in Medicaid, or have 12 years or less of education share a room with their infant as recommended by the AAP than those with private health insurance, a higher household income, or a higher level of education respectively.

Infant supine (on back) sleep position by maternal characteristics

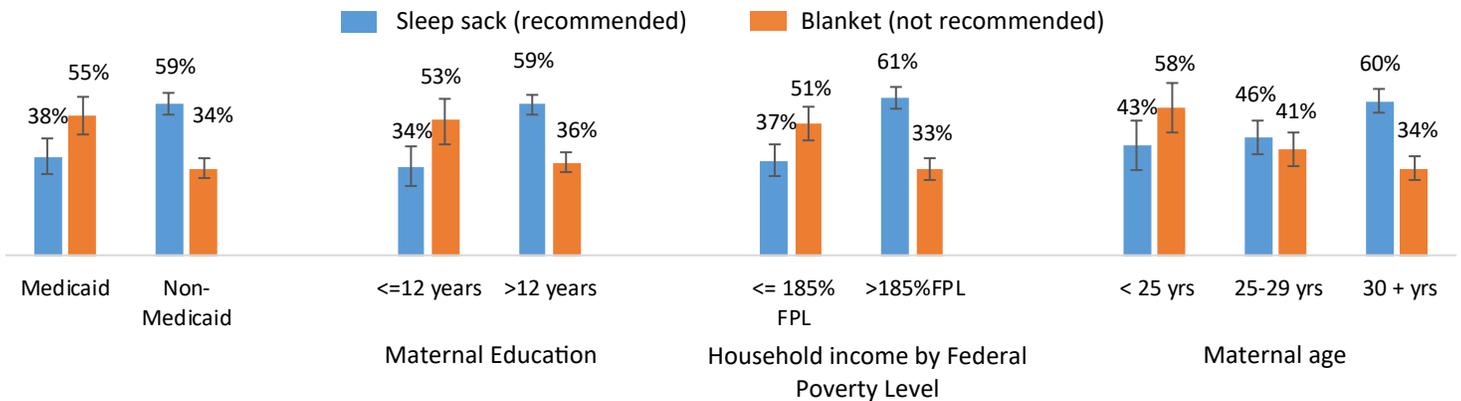


Room Sharing by Maternal Characteristics



Use of Sleep Sacks (recommended) and Blankets (not recommended)

Infant most often put to sleep in a sleep sack or with a blanket by maternal characteristics



Significantly higher percentages of women who are ≥ 30 years old, are in the higher household income group, or have more than 12 years of education put their baby to sleep in a sleep sack and significantly lower percentages put their baby to sleep with a blanket than those less than 30 years old, those in the lower income group, or those with 12 years or less of education respectively.

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